

## **The Road Ahead: Year by Year goals for the Hidden Sparks Program** *A Strategic Plan for Schools*

### ***Introductory note:***

*The goals set out below follow a developmental sequence. Goals for phase one lead into goals for phase two; each phase builds upon ones before. Growth in the program is identified by mastery of skills in the progressive stages.*

*The five phases described below may coincide with numbers of years in the program, but not always. Not all schools start at the same place. For some the first year in the program will also be the first steps down the road; other schools may be further ahead when they join Hidden Sparks. An initial conversation between the school and staff from Hidden Sparks will help assess the most appropriate phase in our curriculum for the school to begin its work.*

### **Phase 1 Goals**

Students	Learning about their own learning profiles as a precursor to understanding the range and diversity of learning.  Recognizing their strengths and putting boundaries around their struggles
Teachers	Understanding the component parts of learning as well as the diversity of learning profiles  Developing skills in the observation of students  Recognizing the importance of their students' strengths  Communicating non-judgmentally with students  Becoming familiar with Hidden Sparks Principles and the Teacher Resource Guide.
Coaches	Demonstrating comfort and proficiency in the skills of student observations, debriefing with teachers, and facilitating monthly meetings with teachers.  Presenting and supporting through their coaching the understanding of learning as comprised of component parts as well as the diversity of learning profiles.  Developing ease and authority as a mentor among peers.  Facilitating the partnership between the school administration and Hidden Sparks.
School	Accepting its role in partnership with Hidden Sparks with the ultimate goal of sustaining the Hidden Sparks program independently.  Supporting scheduling of Hidden Sparks meetings within school as well as the attendance of Internal Coaches at Hidden Sparks meetings out  Endeavor to add a new Internal Coach each year with the goal of each school division (elementary, middle school, etc.) having at least one (Internal) coach.

## Phase 2 Goals

Students	<p>Developing skills in metacognition awareness and self-advocacy</p> <p>Developing understanding for the diversity of learning</p> <p>Learning the precepts of collaborative problem solving</p>
Teachers	<p>Understanding their own personal learning profile and its impact on what and how they teach</p> <p>Understanding their lessons and the cognitive demands inherent in each lesson</p> <p>Setting up classrooms to reflect diverse learning profiles within that classroom.</p> <p>Teaching/modeling/incorporating metacognitive skills in their lessons.</p> <p>Reinforcing their ability to communicate non-judgmentally with students by introducing the precepts of collaborative problem solving to their students</p>
Coaches	<p>Working with teachers to preview and adapt their lesson plans based on the range of learning profiles in their class.</p> <p>Focusing teachers on the importance of students learning about their own learning, i.e. teaching metacognition awareness.</p> <p>Guiding teachers in talking with students about their learning</p> <p>Guiding teachers in coaching students in collaborative problem solving</p> <p>Providing guidance when and where needed to administrative leadership</p>
Schools	<p>Using professional staff development and communications with parents to help the school community focus specifically on understanding learning profiles.</p> <p>Utilizing Hidden Sparks Coaches as resources for the entire school with the capability of giving workshops to teach and integrate Hidden Sparks language and perspectives into the school culture. Topics for such workshops include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the central role of student observations</li><li>• understanding neurodevelopmental constructs and developing metacognition awareness</li><li>• the tenets of collaborative problem solving and talking with students</li><li>• teaching social cognition skills</li><li>• setting up classrooms to meet diverse learning needs</li><li>• communicating with parents at parent-teacher conferences and throughout the year.</li></ul>

**Phase 3 Goals**

Students	Deepening metacognition skills and self-advocacy Deepening understanding of collaborative problem solving skills
Teachers	Collaborating with other teachers in the observation of students in classrooms other than their own, and sharing Hidden Sparks approaches with one another. Continuing the focus on learning profiles and teaching students about their own learning.
Coaches	Reinforcing the use of Hidden Sparks ideas as agents of change within the classroom by deepening work with teachers in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• learning profiles</li><li>• strategies to meet individual learning profiles</li><li>• metacognition and self advocacy</li><li>• collaborative problem solving.</li></ul>
Schools	Increasing the collaboration and mutual observation of teachers within the school (critical friends model). Increasing the number of Internal Coaches as preparation for sustainability when both the Hidden Sparks formal programming and the presence of the External Coaches end after Year Five Beginning discussions on the transition from coaching by External Coaches to coaching by Internal Coaches. Increasing the number of grades being supported either through an Internal or External Coach.

### **Phase 4 Goals**

*Note: In schools with External Coaches the separation from the formal programming of Hidden Sparks begins in the fourth year. A cohort of Internal Coaches should be in place. These Internal Coaches begin to define their future role as the Coaches for classroom teachers. The Administration should be sufficiently cognizant of the ideas and principles behind Hidden Sparks to support them.*

**Students:** Reinforcing their understanding of how knowledge of metacognition has an impact on their lives and behavior outside the classroom walls.

**Teachers:** Emphasis on the use of Hidden Sparks ideas beyond the classroom walls and the classroom teacher, such as within child study teams or resource rooms.

Using Hidden Sparks principles in teacher meetings and conferences with parents.

Continued and deepened use of metacognitive language and lessons and planning for the range of learners.

**Coaches:** Working with the educational leadership wherever possible to reinforce Hidden Sparks sensibilities outside the classroom.

Beginning the review of students and developing plans for sustaining their support after the 5<sup>th</sup> year.

**School:** Increasing the number of Internal Coaches in preparation for the departure of the External Coaches after the 5th year

Supporting multiple classrooms working with the Hidden Sparks model.

Continuing to integrate Hidden Sparks into the culture of the school through classroom observations and staff development workshops.

### **Phase 5: Goals**

*Note: Year 5 is the phase out year for the External Coach working within the school*

- Students:** Consolidating an internal recognition of their own learning strengths and struggles.  
Understanding and creating their own metacognitive tools to assist themselves in learning.  
Using collaborative problem solving skills.
- Teachers:** Continued collaboration with teachers and where relevant planning with assistant teachers for range of students. Application of Learning Lenses to the classroom, lesson planning and previewing, the school day, and communication with and about students. Making the shift from working with External Coaches to working with Internal Coaches on the school faculty.
- Coaches:** Continued working with the educational leadership to reinforce Hidden Sparks sensibilities outside the classroom and joint planning to help position the school for continuity of the program and approach beyond ECP program.  
Preparation of teachers to help continue the program and approach- emphasis on helping facilitate peer observations, increased teacher leadership in Hidden Sparks monthly meetings, continued and planned opportunities throughout the year for joint workshops between the ECP coach and ICP coaches and mentoring to ICP coaches in this role.
- School:** Developing a plan for sustaining the precepts of Hidden Sparks, specifically, the emphasis on student observation, the diversity of learning profiles, and the need for communicating non-judgmentally with students. Use of Hidden Sparks resources if helpful for staff meetings and continued professional support.  
Continuing to review students systematically so that appropriate support can be provided.

### **Tools for incorporating Hidden Sparks precepts into a school:**

- Classroom observations of students and development of specific strategies to support these students, conducted by the Internal Coach in conjunction with classroom teacher.
- Monthly in-school grade-level meetings led by Internal (or/and External) Coach on topics related to classroom teaching and learning which reflect Hidden Sparks thinking.
- Full faculty and staff workshops by Internal Coaches and other Hidden Sparks mentors which demonstrate the thinking behind and the use of Hidden Sparks ideas.
- Resources provided to ICP Coaches through full group meetings, annual coach retreat, Internal Coach meetings and conference calls on current educational issues.
- Hidden Sparks Without Walls webinars and PowerPoints.